

Winter Street Church
880 Washington Street
Bath
Sagadahoc County
Maine

HABS No. ME-154

HABS
ME

12 - BATH

5.

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. ME-154
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WINTER STREET CHURCH

Location: 880 Washington Street, northwest corner at Winter Street, Bath, Sagadahoc County, Maine

Present Owner: Sagadahoc Preservation, Inc.

Present Occupant: Bath Marine Museum

Present Use: Bath Marine Museum displays

Statement of Significance: This wooden church, a vernacular interpretation of the Gothic Revival style, is one of the finest examples of American Gothic Revival church architecture surviving in New England today.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1843-44. Dedicated on February 1, 1844.
2. Architect: Anthony Coombs Raymond (1798-1879), of Bath.
3. Original and subsequent owners: Sagadahoc County Registry of Deeds.

1844 Deed. January 11, 1844, recorded March 31, 1846.
Book 23, Page 563.
George F. Patten
to
Winter Street Congregational Society

1961 Deed. October 27, 1961, recorded October 27, 1961.
Book 325, Page 135.
Winter Street Congregational Society and Deacons of
Winter Street Congregational Church of Bath
to
Winter Street Congregational Church (United Church
of Christ)

1965 Agreement of Consolidation. Recorded October 1, 1965.
Book 344, Page 585.
Central Congregational Church and Winter Street Congregational Church (United Church of Christ)
into
United Church of Christ (Congregational)

1971 Deed. August 4, 1971, recorded August 4, 1971.
Book 377, Page 729.
United Church of Christ (Congregational)
to
Sagadahoc Preservation, Inc. 12-BATH
5-

1973 Easement Deed - Historic Place. April 12, 1973,
recorded April 17, 1973.
Book 389, Page 838.
Sagadahoc Preservation, Inc.
to
State of Maine

4. Builder: Anthony Coombs Raymond, of Bath. Granite foundation laid by John Weeks.
5. Alterations and additions: In 1845 the seating capacity of the church was made greater by reducing the vestibule in width to give 24 additional pews on the floor, and by moving the singing gallery back to give four additional pews in the gallery.

An Italianate Parish House, designed by architect Francis H. Fassett of Portland was built in 1864, adjoining the church on the north side.

The interior of the church, particularly the altar area, was remodeled in 1890 under the supervision of John Calvin Stevens (1855-1940) of Portland--Maine's foremost Shingle Style and Colonial Revival architect.

B. Historical Events and Persons Connected with the Structure:

The five men on the original Building Committee for the Winter Street Church were important Bath shipbuilders and shipping merchants: George F. Patten, Thomas Harwood, Caleb Leavitt, Charles Clapp, Jr., and Gilbert C. Trufant.

The Winter Street Church was the religious edifice for many Bath shipbuilders, ship owners, captains, and their families.

The Winter Street Church was the first preservation project undertaken by Sagadahoc Preservation, Inc., in 1971. The church and parish house have been successfully restored. The parish house is now used as exhibit space by the Bath Marine Museum.

C. Sources of Information:

1. Old views: Photograph in the collection of the Bath Marine Museum, Bath, Maine, probably c. 1870.

2. Bibliography:

- a. Primary and unpublished sources:

Deeds. Sagadahoc County Registry of Deeds, 752 High Street, Bath, Maine, 04530.

Records of the Winter Street Church, Bath, including Record of the Doings of the Proprietors of a New Meeting House, Book 2, 1830-1894, in the collection of the Bath Marine Museum, Bath, Maine.

- b. Secondary and published sources:

American Sentinel, Bath, Maine, November 13, 1890.

Bath-Brunswick (Me.) Times Record, Brunswick, Maine, May 19, 1971, p. 3.

Bath Daily Sentinel and Times, Bath, Maine, April 6, 1864.

Bath Daily Times, Bath, Maine, June 14 and 16, 1879.

Bath Enterprise, Bath, Maine, November 19, 1890.

Celebration of the One Hundredth Anniversary of the Organization of the Winter Street Congregational Church at Bath, Maine, 1895, booklet, Bath, 1896.

Maine Times, Topsham, Maine, July 23, 1971, pp. 18-19.

Owen, Henry Wilson. History of Bath. Bath, 1936, p. 418.

Portland Press Herald, Portland, Maine, May 27, 1971, p. 13.

Winter Street Church National Register Nomination, 1971.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: A three-stage tower with spire rises at the center front of this two-and-a-half story wooden Gothic church. A later two-and-a-half story wooden Italianate parish house adjoins it on the north.

2. Condition of fabric: Excellent

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: The church is 60 feet wide, 78 feet deep, and 24 feet high from the ground level to the roof eaves. The tower is 100 feet tall. The parish house is 36 feet wide and 54 feet deep. Both buildings are rectangular.
2. Foundations: The church has a granite foundation. The parish house has a brick and granite foundation.
3. Wall construction: Wood with wood trim.
4. Trim and finish: Church. The facade is divided into three bays by raised pilasters which contain recessed pointed arches with recessed trefoils. The two corner pilasters have square panels with recessed quatrefoils above the cornice and terminate in octagonal spires. The two inner pilasters are surmounted above the cornice by identical pilasters which form the corners of the first stage of the tower. The center bay contains a double pointed arched window, framed at the top by an applied flat wooden arch, with a recessed quatrefoil between the two windows, and flanked by raised pilasters which terminate in elongated points. The two side bays are identical. Each contains a door flanked by raised pilasters with recessed pointed arches which support a flowing pointed arch topped by a carved flame-like ornament. Contained within the arch is a recessed quatrefoil between two recessed pointed arches, echoing the window top. Between each door and the corner pilaster is a pilaster rising to the entablature, also detailed with a recessed pointed arch and trefoil. Along the left (southern) side is a series of four windows, each identical to that in the center bay of the facade. Along the right (northern) side are three identical windows. The wall surfaces of the facade and the sides are finished with narrow matched boarding. The rear corners have pilasters detailed identically to those on the facade. A two-story rectangular apse projects from the center of the rear wall. This rear wall surface is clapboarded. An applied semi-circular wooden arch in the gable of the roof encloses a single rectangular window with flat trim.

Parish house. The facade is divided into three bays by slightly raised pilasters with recessed rectangular panels. At the first-floor level the center bay contains a door flanked by pilasters with recessed rectangular panels which support a semi-circular paneled wooden arch topped by a projecting cornice. The two side bays contain identical

rounded arched windows. At the second-floor level each bay contains a pair of rounded arched windows resting on a rounded string course which projects between the pilasters. The gable originally contained a rosette window which is now boarded up. Identical windows are repeated along the sides and rear. All the wall surfaces are clapboarded.

5. Chimneys: There is one brick chimney at the northwestern corner of the church. There is also one brick chimney at the center rear of the parish house. Both are plain.

6. Openings:

- a. Doors: Church. The entrance doors are double doors, slightly recessed. They each have a recessed, square, molded lower panel and a tall, recessed, pointed arched, molded upper panel. Two single, four-paneled doors lead to the basement, one in the rear wall and one on the left side.

Parish house. The entrance door is a double door, slightly recessed. Each door has six recessed, molded panels.

- b. Windows: Church. Each window of the double windows is identical. The rectangular section is comprised of triple-hung nine-light sashes. The pointed arch is fixed, divided in a pattern of intersecting pointed arches into six lights. The rear gable window is a fixed eighteen-light sash.

Parish house. The double-hung first-floor windows have six-light lower sashes and ten-light upper sashes with three wedge shaped lights and one semi-circular light in the arch. The double-hung second floor windows have a two-light lower sash and a four-light upper sash with two wedge shaped lights in the arch. All the windows are framed by projecting heavily molded bands. Double-hung windows with three lights in either sash are recessed in the brick foundation wall on the facade. Similarly recessed basement windows on the sides and rear are double hung with six-light sashes.

7. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: The church and the parish house have gable roofs shingled in asphalt.
- b. Cornice: Church. A wide, two-part, flat entablature, pierced only by the four facade pilasters, runs around the entire building. It is topped by a projecting

molded cornice which runs continuously around the entire building. On the facade the cornice is surmounted by a solid wooden balustrade of recessed quatrefoils which is divided into two segments by the tower. At the rear is a raking cornice with an identical entablature.

Parish house. A flat entablature is divided in two parts by a projecting molded band, which continues around the entire building. On the facade the upper part of the entablature contains turned pendants. It is broken out over the pilasters. A projecting molded cornice continues around the entire building and forms a raking cornice on the facade gable, where the pendants are repeated below it. At the rear the entablature and cornice define a pediment in the gable, supported by corner pilasters identical to those on the facade.

8. Tower: The square church tower is divided into three stages, each of a lesser diameter than the one below it. The lower part of the facade face of the first stage has a smaller version of the double pointed arch window below it. The upper part of each face has an applied wooden diamond containing a recessed quatrefoil. All four wall surfaces are finished with flush horizontal boarding. The corner pilasters of this stage, detailed identically to the corner facade pilasters of the church with recessed pointed arches and recessed trefoils, have square panels with recessed quatrefoils at their tops. Between these panels is an entablature identical to that on the main building. Above, at the beginning of the second stage, is a solid wooden balustrade with recessed quatrefoils, identical to that on the facade. Above this balustrade the corner pilasters of the first stage terminate in spires. The second stage of the tower is a belfry with pointed arch openings in each face. It has corner pilasters and an entablature band identical to the first stage, topped by a projecting molded band. Above this molding the pilasters of the second stage terminate in spires and the third stage begins. The wall surfaces of this stage are finished with flush horizontal boarding, each face containing a recessed pointed arch. This stage has corner pilasters and an entablature band identical to the other two stages, again topped by a projecting molded band. Above this band the corner pilasters of the third stage terminate in spires. A tall spire rises from the center, surmounted by a bannerette weathervane.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: Church. A narrow vestibule runs across the full width of the eastern end. The sanctuary occupies the

remaining floor space: three curved sections of pews face a raised platform at the center of the western end. Behind the rear wall to either side of the platform are small rooms. A gallery runs across the back and along the full length of either side of the sanctuary at the second floor level.

Parish house. A narrow foyer runs across the front of the first floor, connected at the southern end to the church. The remainder of the space is one room. On the second floor the space is broken up into several rooms of varying sizes.

2. Stairways: Church. Stairs at either end of the vestibule lead to the gallery. A stair at the rear of the church leads to the basement.

Parish house. A stairway at the northern end of the foyer leads to the basement and to the second floor.

3. Flooring: Church. The floors are carpeted.

Parish house. Modern flooring on the first floor, a painted hardwood floor on the second floor.

4. Wall and ceiling finish: Church. Plaster, painted. The sanctuary ceiling is arched.

Parish house. Plaster, painted. On the first floor the wooden beams, arched at the ends, which support the second floor are exposed and painted.

5. Doors: Church. Modern double padded doors lead from the vestibule to the sanctuary. A single wooden four-paneled door with molded styles and rails leads to the sanctuary from the rooms at the left of the raised platform. Similar doors lead from the vestibule stairs to the gallery.

Parish house. A double paneled wooden door leads from the church to the foyer. A six-paneled wooden door leads to the basement.

6. Trim: Church. An elaborate wooden entablature rings the entire sanctuary at the ceiling line, except on the arched singing gallery at the center of the rear gallery. Two molded bands with a flat section between them form a lower band; a flat surface forms a middle band; and a molded cornice projects as an upper band. Plaster garlands were added to the middle section during the 1890 remodeling. The solid wooden balustrade of the gallery is carved with the Greek key motif near the top; paneled in the middle;

and carved with a circle and center design near the bottom. At the center rear of the gallery is mounted a clock given to the previous Congregational meeting house in 1842. A simple, molded wooden chair rail rings the sanctuary. The windows all have folding wooden slatted shutters. The raised platform and apse were remodeled in 1890. The platform is faced with narrow vertical boarding; the rear curved section has a balustrade of open balusters. Behind the platform in the apse the organ pipes are concealed in an elaborate wooden structure, classically detailed. Fluted Ionic columns on a paneled base support a dentil cornice. The moveable wooden pulpit has a recessed molded arch on its front face. Pilasters, with delicately dentiled cornices, at each corner support a flat entablature with a cornice of dentils which are detailed as smaller versions on the pilaster tops. All the trim is painted.

Parish house. The first floor has a wainscot of narrow horizontal boards with a narrow molded chair rail along the windowed walls. The windows have heavy molded trim. The windows of the second floor have flat trim. Some of them have slatted wooden shutters. All the trim is painted.

7. Lighting: Electric

8. Tower: The church tower contains a cast brass bell.

D. Site:

The lot on which the church and parish house stand contains mature trees and is handsomely landscaped. Directly across Washington Street is the Bath city park.

Prepared by Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr.
and
Mary-Eliza Wengren
September 1971

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

These records were made during 1971 and 1972 in the course of a photo-data project in the cities of Bath, Hallowell, Monmouth, and Richmond in the State of Maine. The project was arranged in response to the initiative of Mrs. Linda B. Clark of Row House, Inc., in Hallowell, Dr. Charles E. Burden of the Bath Marine Museum, Mrs. Paul L. Roberts of the Richmond Historical and Cultural Society, and Mr. H. Earle Flanders of Monmouth. All of these preservationists actively solicited or contributed funds and effectively fostered increased interest in the architectural heritage of their respective communities. The project

was under the general direction of James C. Massey, at that time Chief of the Historic American Buildings Survey; was supervised in the field by Denys Peter Myers, then Principal Architectural Historian of HABS; was carried on by Student Architectural Historian Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr., Boston University; and was continued by Alan Mast, Maine Arts and Humanities Commission, and Mary-Eliza Wengren (Mrs. Richard E., Jr.), Maine Historic Preservation Commission, under the field supervision of Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr. Photographers were Mark C. Bisgrove, Sylvester Cobbs, Stanley Schwartz, Leon P. Shepard, and Richard Dwight Sturgis.